

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. More specifically, the Examiner objects to the “mechanism” as not being clearly defined in structural detail in the claims. In response, Applicant amended independent claim 1 to further define that the mechanism as including a floor panel on which a vacuum chamber and a vacuum pump are placed, and a coupling member which connects the vacuum pump to the floor panel. Furthermore, claim 8 is cancelled. Therefore, the objection to claim 8 is now moot. For these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the §112 rejection of claims 1-11.

Claims 1-8 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant’s Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of Sweeny (U.S. Patent No. 1,559,804). In response, Applicant traverses the rejection because the AAPA and Sweeny fail to disclose or suggest a mechanism configured for fixing the vacuum pump relative to the vacuum chamber so as to not shrink a flexible pipe at the time of evacuation, wherein the mechanism includes a floor panel on which the vacuum chamber and the vacuum pump are placed, and a coupling member which connects the vacuum pump to the floor panel.

In the Office Action on page 3, second paragraph, the Examiner acknowledges that the AAPA does not teach a mechanism that has a bar attached to vacuum pumps near a flexible pipe and supporting the bar to reduce shrinking of the flexible pipe by attaching the bar to the floor. The Examiner also acknowledges that the

AAPA does not teach a coupling member connected between an inlet pipe on the vacuum pump and the floor panel in a direction in which the flexible pipe extends, and which is attached to a floor panel.

As shown in FIG. 8 of the present application, when a vacuum chamber 16 is evacuated by vacuum pumps 18, a flexible pipe 36 shrinks causing movement of an inlet pipe 32 and an elbow pipe 34 due to movement of the vacuum pumps 18. In order to overcome this movement of the vacuum pumps during an evacuation, the Examiner asserts Sweeny in combination with the AAPA teaches the features of the present application. In particular, the Examiner asserts Sweeny teaches a mount for supporting a flexible hose that prevents damage to a vacuum inlet pipe (*i.e.*, elbow 11 and hose coupling 27) caused by tensile forces acting on the vacuum. The Examiner further asserts that the vacuum includes a flexible pipe 16 attached to the vacuum by a vacuum inlet pipe (*i.e.*, elbow 11 and hose coupling 27), coupling members (*i.e.*, support rods 18, 18 prime, 22, 24) connected between the vacuum inlet pipe (*i.e.*, elbow 11 and hose coupling 27) and a floor panel (*i.e.*, truck 23). (See FIGs. 1 and 1A).

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's statement that the truck 23 is a floor panel. The truck 23 of Sweeny is not a floor panel on which the vacuum pump is placed, but is instead merely a base of the vacuum pump. As shown in FIG. 1 and described on page 3, lines 29-36 of Sweeny, the truck 23 has wheels 35 and 37 which allow the truck 23 to move.

Accordingly, assuming *arguendo* that the proposed combination of the Examiner is possible, the combination of the AAPA and Sweeny would not be able to achieve the advantages of the present invention because even if the air hose 16 of Sweeny is connected to the vacuum chamber 16 described in FIG. 8 of the present application (*i.e.*, the AAPA) so that the vacuum chamber is evacuated through the air hose 16 of Sweeny, the shrinkage of the air hose 16 (*i.e.*, flexible tube) can not be avoided at the time of evacuation because the cleaner (*i.e.*, vacuum pump) of Sweeny is moveable. For this reason, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection of claims 1-7 and 10.

Claims 9 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA and Sweeny, and further in view of Elliotte (U.S. Patent No. 2,663,894). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the reasons recited above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1.

Elliotte is merely cited for teaching support of a load with a chain tension. Elliotte suffers from the same deficiencies as Sweeny, namely wheels 38, 65 and those of the motor truck 10 prevent the mechanism from fixing the vacuum pump relative to the vacuum chamber so as not to shrink the flexible pipe at the time of evacuation by having a mechanism provided with a floor panel in which the vacuum chamber and the vacuum pump are placed. Additionally, a coupling member which connects the vacuum pump to the floor panel is not disclosed or suggested in Elliotte. Since claims 9 and 11 depend upon claim 1, they necessarily include all the features of claim 1 plus other additional

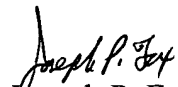
features. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the §103(a) rejection of claims 9 and 11 has also been overcome for the same reason as mentioned above to overcome the rejection of independent claim 1, and respectfully requests that the §103(a) rejection of claims 9 and 11 also be withdrawn.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that this Application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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